



## **Office of the Mayor**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **City wins ruling, shuts down illegal tattoo business**

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An illegal tattoo parlor has been shut down and its unlicensed operators have been found in contempt of court after a minor received two tattoos and a body piercing without legally required parental authorization.

Cosmic Ink, 1930 S. Franklin St., was closed this morning by authorities who seized its equipment and assets following a ruling in St. Joseph County Superior Court. The operators – Timothy R. Campbell and Hayley M. Silva Campbell – received notice they were violating a March 30, 2004, injunction that prohibited their unlicensed operation.

Judge William T. Means' ruling came about because of cooperative action among several city departments – Administration and Finance, Code Enforcement, Legal and Police – along with the St. Joseph County Health Department in response to a parent's report of the illegal activity.

The action was precipitated by the parent's report in April to George Kendall, a public services officer with the South Bend Police Department. The parent said her 17-year-old daughter received tattoos on each of her forearms and a piercing on her lower lip from Timothy Campbell. Campbell, the girl said, neither asked for identification nor sought a parental waiver as required by law.

"We always appreciate and use the information provided by citizens," said Ann-Carol Nash, assistant city attorney. "[In this case,] it was absolutely crucial. There is absolutely no way we would have been able to make a case without them coming forward."

The investigation brought together authorities from the South Bend Police Department, the city's licensing auditor, South Bend Code Enforcement, the city's Legal department

and Marc Nelson and Charles Przybylski of the county health department's environmental division.

As soon as the investigation was complete, the city on June 27 filed a motion for contempt with the St. Joseph County Superior Court. This morning's ruling came more than three years after the City of South Bend first obtained a permanent injunction against the Campbells from using the property or another location in the city to operate a tattoo or body-piercing business without licensing.

Police, code-enforcement and health-department authorities this morning seized items associated with the tattoo and body-piercing operations, including designs, needles, inks, studs, hoops, rings and jewelry.

The Campbells had operated since 2002, but had never obtained a city license. They repeatedly were informed of the licensing requirements of their business through warning notices dating back to August 2003. Although they had applied for a health department permit between 2002 and 2004, they had never sought any of the legally required city licenses. The city's actions culminated in obtaining a restraining order in March 2004.

In addition to the illegal tattoo business, the property has ongoing code issues, including three unlicensed pit bulls on the premises, said Catherine Toppel, director of code enforcement.